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UNCLAS AMMAN 005905

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: N/A

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SUBJECT: PROPOSED DEMOCRACY CONFERENCE

1. POST CONCURS WITH THE IDEA OF A REGIONAL DEMOCRACY CONFERENCE TO DISCUSS HOW BEST TO PROMOTE THE ISSUES RAISED IN REFTTEL, WITH THE GOAL OF BETTER FOCUSING OUR REGIONAL EFFORTS AND OF ACHIEVING GREATER REGIONAL COORDINATION BETWEEN EMBASSIES AND WITH THE VARIOUS WASHINGTON AGENCIES. WHILE THE SITUATION IN EACH COUNTRY IS UNIQUE, NONE OPERATES IN TOTAL ISOLATION FROM ITS NEIGHBORS, AND THERE ARE CONSTANTS WHERE A REGIONAL APPROACH CAN BE BENEFICIAL.

2. POST IS INTERESTED IN EXPLORING BEST PRACTICES, AS WELL AS COORDINATING APPROACHES TO THE MEPI INITIATIVE. ISSUES OF MOST RELEVANCE HERE WOULD BE JUDICIAL REFORM, PRESS FREEDOMS, THE ROLE OF NGOS, CIVIL SOCIETY AND EDUCATION, INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY AS A CATALYST FOR DEMOCRACY, AND ELECTIONS TRAINING.

GNEHM